Claims

What is claimed is:

1.   A system for planning installation of a plurality of application or service components, comprising:

an interface component for entering desired system configuration information, the interface component providing an installation procedure based on dependency requirements for the plurality of components.

2.   The system of claim 1, wherein the system configuration information includes information identifying selected components to be installed.

3.   The system of claim 2, further including a dependency engine programmed to ensure proper dependency between the selected components.

4.   The system of claim 3, wherein the dependency engine is further programmed to add each component necessary to ensure proper dependency in response to determining that an improper dependency exists based on the selected components.

5.   The system of claim 2, wherein the installation procedure identifies an order for installing the selected components.

6.   The system of claim 5, wherein the system configuration information further includes information identifying a plurality of computers across which the components are to be installed, the installation procedure further identifying an order for installing the selected components on each of the plurality of computers.

7.   The system of claim 6, further including a file generating component programmed to generate a file identifying a relationship between each of the plurality of computers and the selected components that are to be installed.

8. The system of claim 7, wherein the interface component further comprises computer-executable instructions for writing the file to a predetermined data location.

9. The system of claim 8, wherein the predetermined data location comprises an object of a distributed directory.

10. The system of claim 9, wherein the object further comprises a group object for characterizing a virtual group of computers, the group object including at least one computer object for identifying member computers of the virtual group, the computer object including at least one component object for characterizing the components selected to be installed on the member computers.

11. The system of claim 9, further including a setup engine operable to access the object and automate at least a portion of an associated installation process based on the information stored in the object.

12. A method for planning installation of a plurality of application or service components, comprising:
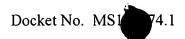
selecting components to be installed; and

determining an installation procedure based on dependency requirements for the selected components.
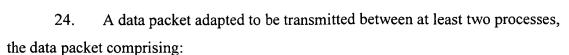
13. The method of claim 12, further including ensuring a proper dependency between the selected components.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein, in response to determining that improper dependency exists based on the selected components, the method further includes adding each component necessary to ensure proper dependency.

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15.   The method of claim 12, wherein the installation procedure provides an order for installing the selected components.

16.   The method of claim 15, further including identifying a plurality of computers across which the selected components are to be installed, the installation procedure providing an order for installing the selected components on each of the plurality of computers.

17.   The method of claim 16, further including generating a file that defines a relationship between each of the plurality of computers and the selected components that are to be installed.

18.   The method of claim 17, writing the file to a predetermined data location.

19.   The method of claim 18, wherein the predetermined data location comprises an object of a distributed directory.

20.   The method of claim 19 wherein the object further includes a group object for characterizing a virtual group of computers, the group object including at least one computer object for identifying member computers of the virtual group, the computer object including at least one component object for characterizing the components selected to be installed on the member computers.

21.   The method of claim 19, further including employing the object to select at least one component for installation based on the information stored in the object.

22.   The method of claim 12, further including printing the installation procedure.

23.   A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the method of claim 12.

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24.   A data packet adapted to be transmitted between at least two processes, the data packet comprising:

an interface component for entering desired system configuration information, the interface component providing an installation procedure based on dependency requirements for a plurality of application or service components.